

## ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A method of modulating the activity of a aberrant cell topoisomerase enzyme involving contacting the enzyme with a compound that inhibits enzyme-mediated cleavage of a polynucleotide substrate with which the enzyme is in complex. Pharmaceutical compositions containing such compounds may be used to treat neoplasias or to inhibit the growth of certain cancer cells. Screening methods can be employed to identify other compounds for these uses.